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MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS PAYS TRIBUTE TO VETERANS

CHOCTAW, Miss. – On Saturday, November 7, 2009, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians honored the men and women who sacrificed much to preserve the United States of America. The second and final day of the 2009 Veterans Pow-Wow commenced at 8:00 a.m. and continued until 10:00 p.m. At 11:00 a.m., the 2009 Choctaw Veterans Parade began. More than thirty entries were in the parade, including naval personnel from the Naval Air Station in Meridian, Miss. This year's Grand Marshall was Gloria White, who rode in the parade to honor her late husband, retired U.S. Army Captain Mike O. White. Captain White had been the Choctaw Veterans Coordinator for a number of years, and he had organized the annual Veterans Parade every year since its establishment.

After the conclusion of the parade, a ceremony was held to honor and celebrate all veterans. Also during the ceremony, prizes were awarded to winners of the Veterans Poster contest and the Veterans Parade entry contest. The poster contest was divided into two categories: a junior category, which consisted of 7th-9th grades, and a senior category, which consisted of 10th-12th grades. Winners in the junior category were: 1st place – Brandi Charlie, 2nd place – Angelina York, 3rd place – Reagan Hickman, and Honorable Mention – Nikkole Isaac. Winners in the senior category were: 1st place – Joe Isaac, 2nd place – Richard King, 3rd place – Dylan Dixon, and Honorable Mention – Kahlon "Jack" Logan. Each of the winners received a cash prize.

The parade entry contest was divided into three categories: Group, Vehicle, and Float. In the Group category, winners were: 1st place – Venture Crew Troop 61, 2nd place – Standing Pine Social Dancers, and 3rd place – Kabocca Boli Dance Group. Winners in the Vehicle category were: 1st place – Choctaw Public Safety, 2nd place – Philadelphia Biker Boys, and 3rd place – Kari Nickey, Young Little East Central Mississippi. The winners in the Float category were: 1st place – Cultural Preservation Programs, 2nd place – Conehatta Elementary, and 3rd place – Pearl River Elementary.

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians extends its appreciation to all of the individuals and organizations that made the 2009 Veterans Parade and Pow-Wow possible. The Tribe also encourages everyone to take the time to thank veterans or those who are currently serving in the military. Without their sacrifice, the people of the United States of America would not have the freedoms they enjoy.

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The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, under the esteemed leadership of Miko Beasley Denson, has an enrolled membership of almost 10,000 and is the only federally recognized tribe in the State of Mississippi. Headquartered in the Pearl River community, near Philadelphia, Mississippi, the Tribe has emerged as a leader in economic development. The Tribe provides a range of governmental services for its members including schools, a hospital, medical clinics, police and fire protection, courts, an elderly center, among many others.